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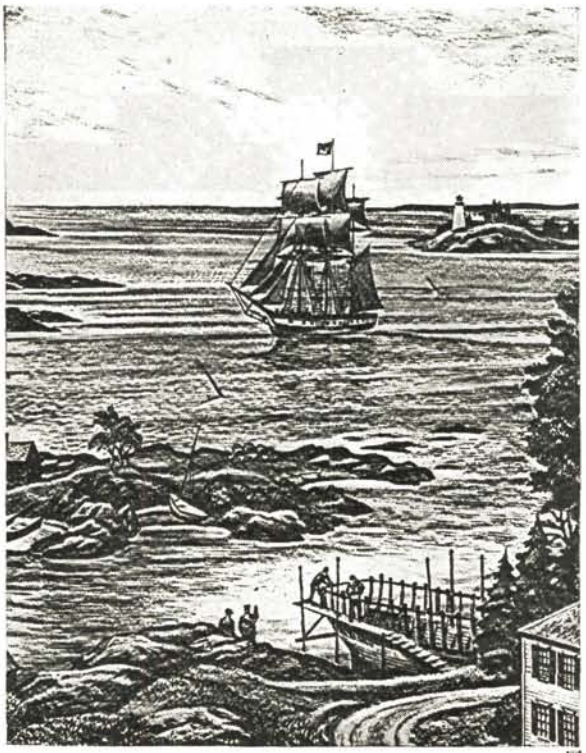

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Mussolini vs. Italy*

BY G. A. BORGESE

A good many people a few months ago were saying quietly that Huey Long was a genius, that whatever his faults he had remade Louisiana. Sometimes they talked from knowledge of Louisiana, more often they just talked. The theory that geniuses are needed is evidently an attractive one just now. Granted that consummate executive skill combined with a passion for benefiting mankind makes genius in statesmanship, is Benito Mussolini a genius? Is his dictatorship justified by its results? The question is certainly not academic, since the fate of Europe in the next ten years may depend upon the answer. Has his career been that of a great man furthering civilization in his own country, increasing prosperity, improving the lot of the average citizen? Or has it been merely a display of vast energy, self-regardful, megalomaniac, and headed, like Napoleon's in 1812, *toward a crash? Abundant material for those who feel, as we do, that the answer to these questions is of the first importance is to be found in two books just published and reviewed in Professor Borgese's article. An Italian, an exile but a lover of his country, he faces the issue squarely, and analyzes the quality of a dictator who now is able to act as if Italy were his own.*—The Editor.

THERE are two contrasting conceptions of human society. First, that it is a collective effort toward a common goal; second, that it is the opportunity and stuff for the great individual, for the genius, or hero, or superman. History either records an objective will towards perfection and truth, or it describes a dark, passive soil which the subjective will of the individual tills for its own crop.

The first conception may be called socialistic, a term which, if broadly taken, includes the liberalism of Western civilization as well as the communistic endeavor of present-day Russia: in a word, anything the meaning of which resides in its good will towards the *res publica*, the commonwealth, the quality of opportunities of individuals in the framework of a collective society. The second conception is strictly anarchical.

Mussolini is an anarchist who has challenged more powerfully than anyone before him, the collectivity of human interests. At the threshold of any serious inquiry into his character and career, such an acknowledgment of the greatness of his significance is only fair.

After a relentless struggle for roughly thirty years he finally subjugated a whole nation, body and reluctant soul. This nation happened to be Italy, his native community. Under different circumstances, in times when military or diplomatic opportunities were open to aliens and Italy was divided and weak, he might have conquered France, as the Italians Mazarin and Bonaparte did, or another country. Italy as a nation, as a community, has a past and a future. She has hardly a present. Today she is a tool, or weapon, in Mussolini's hand. The title of Herman Finer's book, "Mussolini's Italy," is right.

The idea of a collective effort towards a human society whose ultimate aim was the increase of intellectual freedom and knowledge and whose reward was to be collective happiness, materialized in England earlier and with more steady progress than anywhere else. This happened because the spirit bloweth where it listeth, and because the economic and social circumstances favored its development there. But six centuries earlier Dante had deemed universal peace, and therefore a universal authority, an essential prerequisite to the improvement and welfare of the human soul. He did not hesitate between his personal motherland, Florence, and the impersonal promised land of world peace and world justice where his mind and heart had citizenship. Mazzini too, long before Woodrow Wilson, and in spite of all bias in his thinking and of all blunders in his acting, had striven unswervingly for the same hope.

Now, after many and often sorry vicissitudes of the League of Nations, England suddenly volunteers as the defender of the collective ideal, and policeman against the anarchism of Mussolini. It is more than likely that behind and with the ideal of universality she is shielding the particular conservative interests of the British community. It is beyond doubt that her transgression in past ages and her negligences, to put it mildly, in recent years, cast a shadow on the purity and consistency of her present will. And it is regrettable that the fight against Mussolini's Italy strikes more severe blows, at least for the time being, at Italy than at Mussolini. But these qualifications, however sad, do not alter substantially the scheme of things, and the meaning of the struggle: which is a struggle between society and a man. The Italian nation as a whole plays, even more than Ethiopia, the involuntary role of a victim.

An Englishman, Herman Finer, a scholar in the country which is leading in the ideas of liberalism and criticism and which consequently, although with an unfortunate delay, is now the *defensor Ligae*, went to Mussolini's Italy in January 1933. He spent there approximately nine months, and two more months in the following year; he listened to many people, openly Fascist or secretly Antifascist; he interviewed Mussolini himself; he looked at things; he toiled in the libraries. The fruit is a compact book, of nearly six hundred pages: the most comprehensive analysis of Fascism, both in its making and results, which has appeared to date, a storehouse of first-rate information, and a commentary on it, always trustworthy, often brilliant and brilliantly written.

But the reader would be disappointed who, thinking in terms of England and Mussolini and realizing that the book was prefaced in March of this year and published as late as in October, should seek in it a portraiture of Fascism against the background of the present world crisis. Only fleeting sidelights are thrown upon the international policies and ideas of Fascism. It is probable that in the time of his inquiry, and even of his proof reading, Herman Finer belonged among the optimists who thought that Mussolini was "a barbarian grown cautious," as the American professor Brooks still wrote a few months ago, and who fondly believed that the capture of Italy was to him the final achievement, not the start, of his career. It does not seem that the English author anywhere envisages Fascism as a world issue and a world danger. Mussolini, he says somewhere, "has deliberately given national currency to an unknown

THE THOUGHT AND CHARACTER OF WILLIAM JAMES
By RALPH BARTON PERRY
Reviewed by Frank Jewett Mather, Jr.

WITH NAPOLEON IN RUSSIA
From the Memoirs of General de Caulaincourt
Reviewed by David Owen

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* *MUSSOLINI'S ITALY. By Herman Finer. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1935. $3.75.*

SAWDUST CAESAR. By George Seldes. New York: Harper & Bros. 1935. $3.

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soldier's phrase: Better the life of a lion for a day, than that of a sheep for a hundred years! Yet, *if he has continued to roar who will say that he still springs?"* (Italics mine.)

It has been said that Finer's book is intentionally hostile to Mussolini's Italy, and that the author went to Italy with many prepossessions. The contrary seems true. He went there in a spirit of candor and impartiality, in the hope of understanding and possibly appreciating. He does not show a great familiarity with the personalities and publications of the exiles and leading Antifascists; he seems almost to shun too close contact with that suspicious section of opinion; at any rate, the material information which he draws from official Fascist sources prevails immensely over the moderate supply which he occasionally deduces from other sources. If he had gone to work under the command of a preconceived idea as to its conclusions, the book would have been more resolute in its design, more unified in coloring, more concise in its account of developments, and, from a literary standpoint, far better than it is. He does not devote much time or attention to the alleged or real responsibilities of Mussolini and other Fascist leaders in political and common crimes. He believes in Mussolini's personal honesty and poverty, although, he adds, his relatives are doing well. He thinks also that Mussolini is a "humane man," differing, for example, from Brooks who described him as "crude, vengeful, treacherous." Even in what concerns the Matteotti affair, he summarizes very briefly the events, and after that he confines himself to a cautious, and really humane, statement: that history "does not exculpate" the dictator. He accepts very much, too much, of the Fascist propaganda about the unruliness and unworthiness of the parliamentary regime which preceded Fascism. And most important of all, he keeps on believing and repeating, up to the final line of his work, that Mussolini is a genius.

This is very important. Over all the book looms the conception that democracy is the government of the average people by the average people for the average people, whereas dictatorship, or more precisely this Italian Fascist dictatorship, is the rule of the genius.

If that is so, why does this author stand so firmly for democracy against dictatorship, in the general issue as well as in the Italian case?

If this conception were true, not only would Finer's criticism of Fascism stagger, but any plea for democracy would be seriously imperiled. Indeed, we are allowed, both from a biological and an ethical point of view, to believe that the meaning of history is, or ought to be, the improvement of the human race, i. e., the heightening of the average. There is nothing to object to Nietzsche's assumption that "man must be surpassed," although he is not to be surpassed by Nietzsche's "blond wild beast." Even Mussolini, when young and a revolutionist, wrote: "The bridge between man as animal and man as a human, the bridge between prehistory and history, the bridge which will lead humanity from the struggle for life, to an agreement for the sake of life, will be built." We can agree with his words. It is too bad that he himself cannot honestly sign them now.

But it is quite clear that a genius, if there are geniuses, may contribute to the collective improvement of mankind much more than millions of average people ordinarily do. There is no ethical or biological reason why the average man should not be sacrificed to the genius, if he is a genius whose creative work is conditioned by the sacrifice of others. The inference would be that, when and if a genius of statemanship appears, it is good that he be entrusted with dictatorship, cost what it may to the average individual.

Is, then, Mussolini a genius?

If the evidence is to be sought in the positive results of thirteen years of absolute rule, as Finer enumerates them, the sum of the addition is less than nothing. Fascism has killed the spiritual life of the nation, has exploited the best of human nature for its own purposes, has the "children by the throat," bringing up a generation mentally perverted and emotionally intoxicated; it has debauched the Church and made it subservient to profane, nay, blasphemous ends. Have there been any material goods delivered at such a price? Fascism has ruined the national finance and disordered the budget; it has impoverished the economy, cut the wages, lowered the standard of living. The Corporative State, Mussolini's creation, is just a name, a sham, a curtain before an empty stage. True, he has painted over some very visible spots of the country's façade, thereby delighting the tourist's eye and recruiting every summer a flock of foreign-language speaking propagandists. The author of this book is no tourist. He does not care particularly for façades.

Where is the genius?

Maybe, his master stroke is in the past, in the early beginning and at the very origin of Fascist rule. It has been endlessly repeated, and innumerable people still believe it, that Mussolini, in 1922, rescued Italy, and Europe with Italy, from the Bolshevist peril. This is a legend, long exploded. There was no Bolshevist peril in Italy in 1922.*

Or, maybe, his triumph is in the present and the near future: in the steadfastness with which Mussolini is avenging Italy for the defeats she suffered in the treaties of peace, solving her problems of expansion and economic opportunity, restoring the stained honor of her army.

It was often said (in Italy) that Italy won the war and lost the peace. It is fair to assume that such opinion is not shared in Austria, Hungary, Yugo-Slavia, or Germany. Italy won the war and won the peace. No other nation attained a final result comparable to Italy's: namely, the final destruction of the hereditary enemy, which, in Italy's case, was the Hapsburg empire.

True, Italy badly needs, as other nations do, outlets for her overpopulation, a fair distribution of raw materials, equality of economic opportunity among the other nations. It is highly questionable whether the conquest of Ethiopia would afford any relief, worth speaking of, from such difficulties. It is also more than questionable whether the conquest of Ethiopia would crown the Italian army with the glory which the Italian army is supposed to need. The honor of the Italian army was not stained when, forty years ago, an expeditionary force of 14,000 men was annihilated in their blood by 100,000 natives. Six hundred thousand Italians gave their lives in the World War; they had defeats, they had victories too, and the victories were decisive. Not Italy, but the man who masters Italy, needs military glory.

The League of Nations is the institution which could, and should, confront the problems of emigration, raw materials, equal opportunities for all nations. It was never approached by Mussolini in this spirit and with these intentions. He tried only to sabotage and cripple, finally to kill it.

Even at this moment, newspaper headlines make a sharp distinction between Mussolini and the Italian people. Nothing would be easier than an honorable peace, and the progressive settlement of other problems, if only he, Mussolini, would listen to the only suggestion that might come to him from real greatness, and by resigning from power clear the way between his nation and the nations. Even if, as Finer says, he has a reading more vast than any statesman since Gladstone, what did he learn from the books he read, except to lead Italy and the world into their present distressing situation?

Unfortunately, not even a sober writer like Finer is always free from the influence of the romantic idea of genius. A dangerous idea, a mischievous word.

A genius, if the word has to be preserved, is an individual exceptionally endowed by nature with powers which he uses for the knowledge of truth and for the creation of the beautiful and the good.

But there has been a tendency, especially in recent times, to disembody the idea of genius of its spiritual quality, and to conceive of genius in terms of sheer

(*Continued on page* 14)

* See, for example, Finer, pp. 126ff and 161, Seldes, p. 98 and *passim*.

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BYRON AT DRURY LANE

The Napoleon of Rhyme

BYRON: THE YEARS OF FAME. By Peter Quennell. New York: The Viking Press. 1935. $3.50.

Reviewed by SAMUEL C. CHEW

ON the day before he sailed from Dover in April, 1816, Byron visited the grave of Charles Churchill, the satirist, and found melancholy satisfaction in contemplating the obscure resting-place of him who had "blazed the comet of a season." Years later, in his Italian exile, Byron looked back, in a mood of irony touched with complacency, upon the "considerable time" when he had been "the Grand Napoleon of the Realms of Rhyme." He was thinking of the four years between the spring of 1812, when "Childe Harold" was published, and the spring of 1816, when the scandal of the separation from his wife, with its accompanying rumors of iniquity, burst with a fury that resulted in his social ostracism.

It is with these four years that Mr. Quennell, who has already published a little biography of the poet, has here to deal. He calls them the "years of fame," but rather they were the years of notoriety as distinct from fame, of social success and popular applause. The implication is not a little ridiculous that when Byron left England for good, and for his poetic good, he left also his "fame" behind him. Rather the departure was the entrance into a far wider renown. It is true that his social prestige had suffered a blight which was presently to be more deeply tarnished by association with Shelley and later with Hunt; true, too, that some years later (about 1822-23) there was an abatement in the enthusiasm with which his poetry was received (and for this the tediousness of the "regular" tragedies and the slackening tempo of the middle cantos of "Don Juan" were in part to blame); but there was no real decline in his renown as a poet till long after his death. The disappearance of "Byronism" about the middle of the century coincided in date with the triumph of Victorian ugliness, vulgarity, and pretentiousness—a fact which it is difficult to reconcile with Mr. Quennell's theory (though ingeniously argued) that the taste for shoddy and flashy and sensational verse for which Byron's early verse was responsible in a "vast middle-class public" was itself in turn responsible for the grotesque and ugly exoticisms of Victorianism. Why, then, did people drop Byron just at the time when velvet tassels and antimacassars and carved oak furniture and aspidistras (which Mr. Quennell especially dislikes) were most in vogue? The biographer does not explain. But, after all, the vagaries of Victorian taste are not his subject.

He tells a tale already told a hundred times, and tells it well, with an appropriate mingling of witty and sympathetic comment. He does not fall into the error of taking Byron's life and character as the text for a sermon (as so many of his predecessors have done) or into the opposite error of condoning or explaining away or brushing aside the poet's transgressions. If he does not see very deeply (not so deeply as, for example, M. Charles du Bos), he sees clearly and steadily. Apologists and theorists and special pleaders have drawn a hundred red herrings across the trail; but Mr. Quennell is not to be turned aside at any false scent, however pungent. His narrative begins with Byron's return from the Levant in 1811; but it is permitted to fold back upon itself sufficiently often to make comprehensible the childhood influences, the heritage, and environment, which helped to form the extraordinary young man who, after the melancholy months of moody disillusionment that immediately followed his return, blazed suddenly as the comet of the London season of 1812. That comet continued, though with somewhat diminished splendor as gazers became accustomed to its brightness, to hang in the sky for three years. It waned perceptibly, at any rate in the eyes of young romance, after the poet's marriage; and though not quenched, it changed utterly in character after the scandal of 1816. Mr. Quennell's planetarium sets before us the stars and constellations among which this great erratic body traced its path. Each star, some now through distance so small as to be perceptible only through the telescope of research, is described and properly placed, whether in conjunction or opposition. Let us drop the metaphor before we press it too far, and say that Mr. Quennell paints for us a lively picture of Regency society, corrupt, disillusioned, unstably brilliant on the surface of widespread discontent. It was hard-drinking, hard-riding, hard-gambling, and hard-wenching. In the Mayfair crowd of beaux and fops Byron would not have been conspicuously different from other handsome young men who scored successes with many ladies had he not been a poet. A

BYRON AT HYDE PARK—*Contemporary caricatures on this page reproduced from "Byron: The Years of Fame."*

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remark so obvious that it scarcely needs making; but the reader of Mr. Quennell's book needs to be reminded of it.

For Mr. Quennell has elected to tell the story of Byron's years of notoriety with the primary cause of that notoriety left out. It is the fashion among literary historians to say that the poetry of Byron that "counts" began to be written in the summer of 1816. What he wrote before he left England can be disregarded. Biography and criticism are not such distinct departments of literary scholarship that the life of a poet can be set in proper perspective while his poetry is ignored. A few haphazard remarks serve as comment upon "Childe Harold"; the elegiac poems addressed to Thyrza are not mentioned (nor is the problem of the identity of this person alluded to); the Oriental Tales are dismissed as flashy exotics; and even "Lara" is unconsidered. Yet "Lara" contains a self-portrait matchless in force and, essentially, in insight. Monsieur Charles du Bos, it will be remembered, takes the long passage characterizing the protagonist in that poem as the starting-point of his profound analysis of Byron's character. Lady Byron told how once when she mentioned the poem to Byron he remarked that "there was more in it than in any of the rest of them," and as he said this he shuddered and would not meet her eye. That this was not melodramatic posturing on Byron's part is certain; and if there is so much in "Lara" it is a document not to be ignored.

With this important reservation, that what gives lasting significance to Byron's "years of fame," namely that they were the years when he won fame as a poet, is disregarded, Mr. Quennell's biography may be heartily recommended, especially to those (if there are such) to whom the story is not familiar. Into the well-worn tale he has managed to work some little new material. He has had access to J. C. Hobhouse's copy of Thomas Moore's biography; but judging from his excerpts from its marginalia the comments of Byron's intimate friend are significant only for the support they give to the suspicion (for which there are other grounds) that there was an element of homosexuality in the poet's nature. From the Byron archives in Albemarle Street he has been permitted by Sir John Murray to cull some specimens of the sort of "fan mail" which Byron received during these years. There is something touching in these epistles, now for the first time printed from the yellowed notepaper; but they do not tell us anything that we did not already know or at any rate have reason to suspect about the years when Byron was the spoiled darling alike of the West End and of the "vast middle-class." For the rest, the essentials of the story are told and the evidence interpreted in accordance with the best modern scholarship.

Samuel Chew is professor of English at Bryn Mawr College.

Imagination All Compact

SHAKESPEARE'S IMAGERY AND WHAT IT TELLS US. By Caroline Spurgeon. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1935. $4.

Reviewed by S. Gorley Putt

INTERPRETATION of Shakespeare from the word-content of his plays is manifestly illegitimate by reason of the nature of dramatic art. But images, "modified by a predominant passion," may, according to Coleridge and Dr. Spurgeon, "become proofs of original genius."

"No one could study Shakespeare closely for years without being reduced to a condition of complete humility," writes the author. Certainly her style is humble enough; she is content to report and indicate. Dr. Spurgeon card-indexed every image in Shakespeare three times over to insure accuracy, providing colored charts so that the reader may appreciate at a glance his range. There are charts, too, for Marlowe and Bacon, and one showing the detailed categories of figures of speech from "daily life" used by Shakespeare and five contemporary dramatists.

DR. CAROLINE SPURGEON

Her first section demonstrates the "revelation of the man" in the light of his imagery, aptly quoting Polonius:

> And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,
> With windlasses and with assays of bias,
> By indirections find directions out.

We are directed to his love of movement (other poets spoke of the silver, watery, or inconstant moon; only Shakespeare achieved "the *visiting* moon"), his dislike of noise and evil smells, and so on. But often in a simple simile there is no deeper indication than the word-reference itself, and such items as Shakespeare's sympathy for snails or the interesting theory that a river description in "Lucrece" originated in his boyhood observation of a curious current under Clopton Bridge in Stratford, merely support what was already obvious about his acute sensibility to the outside world, or his love of country life.

Part II incorporates Dr. Spurgeon's five-year-old exposition (in "Leading Motives in the Imagery of Shakespeare's Tragedies") of recurrent or iterative imagery, enumerating, for example, figures from light in "Romeo and Juliet," sickness in "Hamlet," food and cooking in "Troilus and Cressida," bodily strife in "Lear"; adding the chronicle plays, with imagery from plant growth and subsidiary subjects in individual plays, and comedies, notable for country similitudes, topical and musical references.

This first volume of a contemplated trilogy is disappointing in that it does not interpret Dr. Spurgeon's data beyond her earlier pamphlets. It is top-heavy, like a Japanese battleship, with its imposing superstructure of citation, and exaggerates that constant irritation of multiple-decker sandwiches of prose and quoted verse which mars much Shakespearean criticism. But the continued study should be intriguing. Here for instance, she infers from a scrutiny of their imagery the different workings of the minds of Bacon and Shakespeare. That is flogging a dead horse with an ingenious whip; it will be more exciting to follow her methods in applying the touchstone of imagery to the vexed problems of "Henry VI" and other doubtful entries in the canon, over which Sir Edmund Chambers and the late J. M. Robertson mingled so much ink.

It is almost an impertinence to draw attention to the usefulness of the present work, based as it is on impeccable accuracy. So often chit-chat critics have been able to throw dust in our eyes by theorizing blandly about Shakespeare from a breezy acquaintance with his poetry. There can be no excuse for that now. The appearance of Dr. Spurgeon's third promised volume, treating "the background of Shakespeare's mind and the origins of his imagery," will be the most searching test of her own ability to cope with the full significance of the line of research she has opened up single-handed, and with such fascinating results.

S. Gorley Putt is a Welsh scholar, resident at Yale on the Commonwealth Fund.

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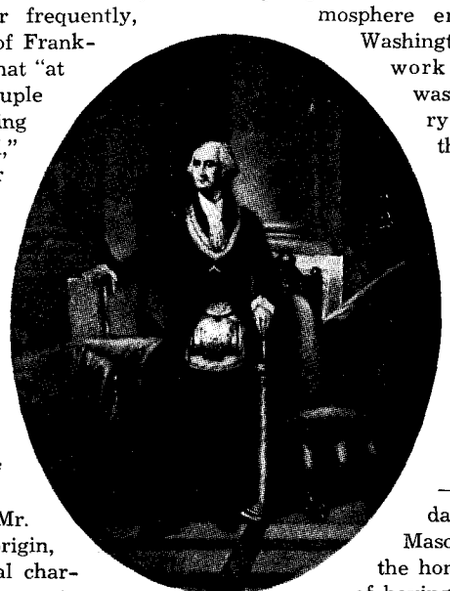
Origins of Freemasonry

REVOLUTION AND FREEMASONRY, 1680-1800. By Bernard Fay. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1935. $3.

Reviewed by MEADE MINNIGERODE

WHAT an alluring title, conjuring up intrigue, mystery, and all manner of secret matters. And, up to a point, a most alluring book; dispensing a very great amount of curious information in the most pleasantly humorous, the most discreetly ironical, the most completely readable style. A book to smile over frequently, as when one reads of Franklin's marriage, and that "at the beginning the couple had the joy of being blessed with a child," and that "it has never been known exactly if that child was a gift from the bride to the groom or from the groom to the bride, although the latter hypothesis seems probable. In any case, it was a gift, and even a surprise for one of them.



WASHINGTON IN MASONIC COSTUME

Fundamentally, Mr. Fay expounds the origin, technique and special character of eighteenth century Freemasonry; a philosophic, or speculative, Masonry in place of the old professional, or operative, system; drawing its membership from among the philosophers and intellectuals rather than from the technical workers; appealing to men of all creeds, races, professions, and nationalities, brotherly and equalitarian—and yet, for the sake of its greater prestige, deeply concerned in the enrolment of great names from among the high nobility, although those great persons were hardly ever equalitarian, not always philosophers, and only infrequently intellectual; setting itself up against neither the Church nor the State, shunning political strife—and yet at all times steeped in the politics of one cause or another.

With the vogue for secret societies and for clubs of all kinds—in conjunction with the nobility's passion for playing with liberal fires, fanned by the new freedom of ideas and speech which had found its first outlet in the American war of independence—one can readily see what all this might, and did, lead to when notions and speeches of every sort began to germinate into the French Revolution.

As to revolution, one of the most interesting portions of the book for American readers will be that setting forth the part played by Freemasonry in instigating and fostering the American revolution against England: that Masonry which "alone undertook to lay the foundation for national unity in America," spreading and working "steadily and silently" throughout the colonies; that Masonry which numbered among its adherents such personages as Washington, Franklin, Otis, Hancock, Paul Revere, the majority of the Continental Congress, all of Washington's trusted staff officers—including, of course, Lafayette—and all of his principal generals; that Masonry whose atmosphere entirely surrounded Washington, the very "framework of [whose] mind" was Masonic; that Masonry of which Franklin, the arch Mason, made such shrewd and continuous use in all his dealings with France; that Masonry which, through one of its prominent lodges in Boston, assisted by a crew of instigated hoodlums, precipitated and achieved the Boston Tea Party —"a great Masonic day," and "American Masonry cannot decline the honor and responsibility of having given the signal for rebellion."

The signal for rebellion; riot and disorder; instigated hoodlums backed by a carefully deliberated secret influence—how familiar that sounds. The storming of the Bastille, the invasion of Versailles by those fishwives so many of whom were men in disguise—all of those much touted spontaneous popular movements, all of them actually deliberately stirred up and artificially enlivened—and one comes at last to the French Revolution in the eager expectation of the most important revelations; revelations which for a long time now have been knocking at the door, to be admitted, and inspected, and found valid or imagined. But it is precisely at this most critical point that this alluring book shuts up like a clam.

One learns a great deal about the French Masonic lodges of the Revolutionary period, a great deal about the liberal nobles, a great deal about the intellectual influence of Masonry on the progress of affairs, a great deal about the delightful Lafayette—the "most efficient and convenient tool which any party or society possessed . . . haunted by the example of William of Orange and obsessed by the image of Washington," who "turned for inspiration to Masonry, which provided him with mirages, and [who] never ceased being haunted by the hope that he could carry through *his* philanthropic, parliamentarian, and Masonic Revolutions."

But concerning that smoke which still arises from elusive and perhaps too carefully hidden fires; concerning the influence of the Prussian lodges; concerning the part played or not played by the radical lodges of the Illuminati; concerning the truth or falsity of the long suspected conspiracy in high and most secret Masonic circles tending towards the deliberate provocation of the destruction of the social order, of monarchy and of religion; concerning the very curious matter, for instance, of the strange unanimity of the *cahier* complaints turned in for the States General; concerning, to go no further, the remarkable circumstances attending the inexplicable retreat of the Prussian army from Valmy—concerning all those matters: nothing.

Perhaps it will be for another volume. At all events, the last word for inquisitive, or is it after all only credulous, minds has not yet been spoken.

Meade Minnigerode is a specialist in the history of the French Revolution and in the early history of the American Republic. He is the author of "Jefferson, Friend of France," and co-author of a life of Aaron Burr.

Bread-and-Milk on the Stoop

By ROBERT P. TRISTRAM COFFIN

THE boy's bowl rested on his knees,
Overhead in the tall trees
Last sunlight turned the twigs to gold,
There was the sound of homebound bees.

A thrush was singing late somewhere,
The high clouds said it would be fair
Tomorrow, they were like white shells
Strewn across the evening air.

The boy dipped in his kitchen spoon,
He would be a tall man soon
Like his father, his father said,
And go out evenings with the moon.

He would marry a girl he knew
And have a horse, or maybe two.
The sweetpeas were like little birds
Beside the stoop, but never flew.

The morning-glory strings got tight
Each time when it was coming night.
His knees would not be bare at all,
Trousers would keep them out of sight.

Cows would be good to have around,
Their bells had an evening sound,
Milk was always cool outdoors,
His toes were the color of the ground.

A man would never want to wade
In the pools a shower made,
This spoonful was the last there was,
Tomorrow he'd play house in the shade.

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The Saturday Review
of Literature

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We Should Like to Know

A NEW weekly magazine called *American Prefaces* has been launched from the University of Iowa under the pilotage of Wilbur Schramm and Norman Foerster. Its avowed purpose is to be a voice for the younger writers of America, especially, one supposes, of mid-America. Among the contributors are Stephen Benét and T. S. Eliot, who can scarcely be regarded as youngsters. But this is ballast. The rest of the cargo comes from new or newish writers; and as a deck load the second number carries the results of a symposium among the youngest generation of intellectuals and artists in the craft of literature. The question was, What do you want?

An overwhelming percentage among them want something definite, positive, constructive in imaginative writing. They are tired of debunking, of "whining, futility, defeatism." They are weary of the sordid. They are bored by exposures. They are fed up with passive pessimism. They are tired of a literature blocked by a series of red lights, like a cross town street in New York with a stop at every corner. They frankly don't know where they are going, but want to go toward a literature that will embrace the problems of modern living, and be genuine and beautiful, not sentimental or ugly.

A year or so ago the same general question was asked in these columns, with replies which often said, in effect: "We have been adequately disillusioned. We can be trusted not to be Pollyannas, Walt Whitmans, boobs, or sob sisters. We don't want to be wounded souls, pathological minds, sourbellies, or crabbers. Give us a chance to go ahead? We are realists with a plus sign on our sweaters."

Now all this may be nothing but words. The percentage of young men and women out of college and without a job is so alarmingly high as to explain any kind of pressure of hope upon will. Keep a young fellow inactive and he will long for anything that is strenuous, including war. Hold back a creative mind, give it no access to the public, force it into idleness or into writing slush, tripe, and sensationalism for a living, and what happens? Either you get satirists and cynics; or an overwhelming desire to break through into clearer air. The first result was typical in the twenties; but who wants any more to belong to a lost generation? That medal has lost its gilding. The new desire is to be builders not wreckers, playwrights not critics, creators not debunkers. Is it just words?

We do not believe for an instant that it is just words. The desire is strong, nor is there any reason why the young writers should not be as positive and constructive as the engineers of America, and the propagandists of individualism in business, and the New Dealers, and the economists of abundance — why they should not lock horns in an equivalent conflict of utterly divergent opinions as to which road leads backward and which ahead. But their job is much more delicate because if they *are* creative minds, and not merely the tradesmen of letters which Mrs. Colum so adequately described in a recent number of the *Review*, they have to build edifices of will and wish and ought and can, in which the imaginations of readers will come to live. For the creative writer only one practical fact about America is of supreme importance. It clearly isn't finished. It is still a country capable of immense surprises, a country that can still escape from the rigidity of circumstance that threatens islands, statelets, and walled-in communities of Europe with petrifaction, atrophy, or suffocation, only to be escaped by the immense hazards of preventive war. And if he feels that carping is bankrupt and it is time to switch the red light into green, then it is his job to create the attitude of mind suitable to a progressing state. For most of us when we fail to act according to common sense or greed or panic or whatever else is dictated by circumstance, do so because we have dramatized ourselves as this or that sort of a person, have borrowed a dress for the imagination, and tried to live up to it. And this dress it has always been the function of the creative mind of the artist or writer or philosopher to supply. It is only a dress, easily shed, easily tattered and soiled, but such clothes do in a very real sense at least help to make the man.

If then these pious aspirations of the young writers are not merely words, it is fair to ask them what they mean by constructive, positive, definite. The youth of Russia, Germany, and Italy (in this respect at least all of the same emotional breed) have gone over wholeheartedly to the positive, the constructive, the definite. They have accepted force as their principle and backed it up by a persuasion which has often been only the rubber casing of a blackjack. The business of the creative writer in such a situation is made simple. Only one attitude of mind is allowable and hence he becomes a propagandist, or (as in Germany and Italy) ceases writing at all. The first question our confident young Americans who propose to embrace the problems of modern living must answer is whether by constructive action they mean violence. And if they do mean violence whose violence? The fascists' attempt to discipline a state so that the profits of capitalism may be guaranteed? The communists' attempt to give power to the proletariat so that every man will some day have his chance? Or some different kind of force applied, which will reinvigorate America? That would be positive, and either constructive or destructive? But what does it mean to the imagination? Let them say.

But if they do not believe in violence unrestrained by law, if, like the majority of all creative writers from Plato and the New Testament down, they are skeptical of force as a solution, and aware that the pen that starts a revolution is usually broken before it is over, then of what can they be confident? Reading the debunking books of the twenties, and reading the "success stories" of the same period, alike made us all wonder what was worth saving in America. These young writers do not feel that way. They believe apparently that we are in for tumult, for the breakdown of stale institutions, for violence, even if not for a rule by violence. But their still unexpressed imaginations go beyond all this to some idea of a state, of a culture, of an attitude of mind worth having. Well, what is it? We should like to know, both because many of us of an older generation have confidence, too, vague yet strong; but also because we fear that youth on the march, not sure of where it is going, and shouting "Let's *do* something," is an easy mark for demagogues, dictators, fanatics, and empty-headed idealists.

Ten Years Ago

1925 was a boom year for biographies of Lord Byron. In the issue of August 29th, 1925, The Saturday Review mentioned E. Barrington's fictionized life, "Glorious Apollo" as "*a sensational novel.*" In the October 17th issue "Byron in Perspective" by J. D. Symon was reviewed, and Samuel C. Chew recommended in the issue of October 31st both the new edition of "Byron," by Ethel Colburn Mayne, and "La Vie de Lord Byron," by Roger Boutet de Monvel. Mr. Chew also reviewed "The Pilgrim of Eternity: Byron—A Conflict," by John Drinkwater, in The Saturday Review for January 30th, 1926. All this interest was occasioned by the celebration of Byron's centenary in 1924.

Today

On page 5 of this issue, Mr. Chew reviews "Byron: The Years of Fame," by Peter Quennell, the story of four years in the poet's life.

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Letters to the Editor: *A. J. Cronin on Serialization*

Condensing "The Stars Look Down"

SIR:— "You Cannot Serve God And Mammon"—that was my grandmother's favorite text and though it has hitherto never commended itself to me, now, through bitter experience, it must take the place of honor above my bed.

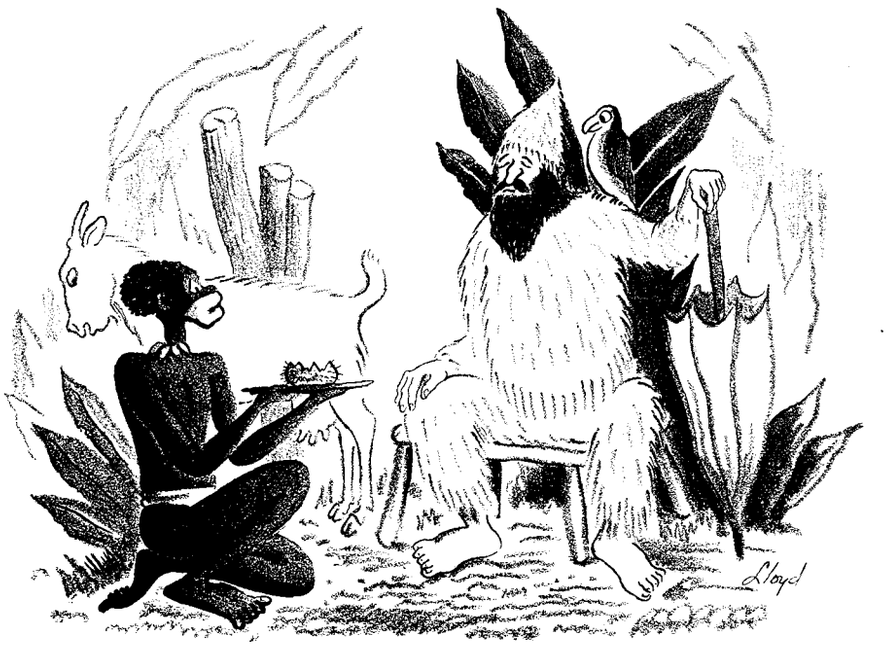
All over England and America my friends—at least most authors come to regard their faithful public thus—have been thrown into varying coils of confusion, like the Gryphon in "Alice in Wonderland," by an apparently simple action of my own. That action was my attempt, earlier in the year, to condense a quarter million word novel to seventy thousand words for the wholly admirable purposes of serialization. I say attempt, though actually I ought to use a harsher word for I now believe this wholesale dismemberment of a book with its subsequent ingenuous rearticulation, to be foredoomed, in every case, to failure.

Since the question is one of general interest, this instance in particular may prove the argument. "The Stars Look Down"—that is to say, the novel as published in book form in England, America, and most European countries—was written under that compulsion which comes from any sincere and genuine creative impulse. The length of the book, its form, scope, content, and ending, were wholly beyond control once the machine was moving under its own momentum. Had the result been diffuse as "Illusions Perdues" or didactic as that historic three-decker, "Pomeroy Abbey," not a word of it could I have spared.

When it came, then, to serialization the ordeal may be imagined. My magazine friends had seen and generously praised the manuscript. They wanted it, they must have it. And since the task was too solemn to be intrusted to an office ingénue waving careless shears from rose-tinted finger nails, the cutting was to be left to me. How innocently I accepted, how unsuspectingly I set to work! But alas, I soon discovered the absurdity of the undertaking.

To reduce my novel to one quarter of its size and yet preserve its shape and meaning—that was the impossibility. I began tentatively by taking out a sentence here, a paragraph there. Hopeless, quite hopeless! In two days' work I lost only a bare three thousand words and my objective was to lose *nearly two hundred thousand*. I tore my hair and cut a chapter out entirely. No use at all—only a bare four thousand words were lost. I felt like the fat lady in the Turkish bath—I couldn't get the damned thing down. With a breaking heart I sacrificed more and more, scenes, characters, and then part III in its entirety. It wasn't the slightest, not the earthliest use! The result was still twice the requisite length. Then with pale lips and a muffled curse I set to and wrote a different story altogether. Any kind of curse would have done but in the circumstances a muffled one was preferred.

Nothing more will be said. But how near to death the business brought me, no one but my Maker and I will ever know. And when the best, or the worst, had been done, when the heat and battle of the day was over, the result, this infant prodigy synthetically generated, so scantily resembled my original creation that in the despairing words of Mrs. Kenwigs I might well have cried: "Is the little creetur reely mine!"



"JUST LIKE YOU TOLD ME, MARSE ROBINSON—ONE OF COCONUT MILK, ONE OF GOAT'S MILK, AND A JIGGER OF RUM."

(*Addenda to Literature—Number 6*)

Let there be no misunderstanding. It is not the serialization of novels which distresses me. Too much highbrow cant has been written upon this subject, forgetful of the fact that many of the greatest novels of all time have been serialized in their day. Balzac and Dickens serialized most of their work. Stevenson's immortal classic "Treasure Island" first saw the light in an obscure weekly journal. "Vanity Fair" was issued in monthly numbers. And that second masterpiece of Thackeray's, "The Memoirs of Barry Lyndon" came to the public eye in a contemporary magazine known as *Frazer's*.

No, it is entirely my experiment which I regret. Nowadays the artist suffers sufficiently through external violation, as for example, when he yields his work to the ruthless hackings of a bad cinema director. How wary should he be, then, of incitement towards self mutilation, to any incomplete venture in hari-kari!

Nor must it be assumed that the reaction is wholly self-conscious. For my own part my mail bag is a continuous reminder that the public is perpetually alert for anything which savors of literary circumvention. And the mere production of two almost dissimilar works bearing the same title has been enough to arouse, albeit unjustly, a suspicion of *blague*. Pained, protesting, and even pitying letters reach me from places wide apart as Manchester and Kansas City. Why the difference? What happened to Hilda? And what in the name of Heaven had I done with Joe? Indeed such a storm of controversy arose here in England, and so many readers of the serial felt, on the publication of the novel, that they had been swindled out of something good, that the editor of *Nash's Magazine* was obliged to give publicity to an announcement explaining the circumstances of the case.

I hope this document may serve as a warning to authors horned by a similar dilemma. I am aware that the hardboiled answer to most modern conundrums is couched in terms of currency. Yet even upon this material plane it is possible to sustain injury. Though the remuneration from serial rights is large, the damaging effect upon book sales, if prejudice arises against the earlier abridged version, may be equally important though less obviously apparent. Thus when the full novel appears A may casually remark to B, "Don't bother about that book. I read the serial and it isn't worth your while."

I hope I may write other short serials. I know I shall write other long novels. But never, as I live, shall I attempt to metamorphose the one into the other. The age of miracles is past. And after all, my old grandmother was right!

A. J. CRONIN.

The Edinburgh Review

SIR:—I am preparing a study of the *Edinburgh Review* during the early years of its existence. I should be grateful for any information which your readers may care to supply.

L. H. BUCKINGHAM.

Dana College, Newark, N. J.

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Samuel Pepys of The Conning Tower

THE DIARY OF OUR OWN SAMUEL PEPYS. By Franklin P. Adams. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1935. 2 *vols.* $6.

Reviewed by CLARENCE DAY

HISTORIANS are a dissatisfied, querulous tribe. They feed upon what they call sources, and they say they want plenty of them. But when they get a great many, then instead of battening peacefully on them they eye some with suspicion, and peck at the rest in disdain and complain because they don't match. It seems that the more sources there are in any given field, the less they agree, and the harder it is for historians who feed on them to escape indigestion.

Historians also have long and frightful quarrels among themselves about sources. Whenever two eminent scholars catch sight of each other depending upon different kinds, they fly into a rage and think up biting things to say of each other. When they are not supplied with sources enough, or when they cannot find any, their disgust is still greater. They then feel resentful and moody and become cross at mankind. It is the duty of mankind, historians think, to produce daily records, and it is the duty of records to stop contradicting each other and fit into one perfect whole.

F. P. A.—*Caricature by Peggy Bacon, from "Off with Their Heads" (McBride).*

Consequently any man who keeps a diary, good enough to become a source and get into print, may as well give up hope of getting any rest after he's dead. In fact the longer he lies in the grave the more clamor he'll hear, as successive flocks of historians settle down on him and pick him to pieces. He will get an abundance of praise and acknowledgments, but he'll get abuse too, for each new generation will feel it their duty to weigh him. They will scold him for having this or that quality instead of the kind they are looking for, and deplore whatever aspect of his nature happens to offend their own times. On the other hand he will be a prominent person for centuries, in historical circles, and hence others too will talk of him and read him and wonder what he was like.

This is bound to be the fate of Frank Adams. He will be a source to consult. When that happens to stuffed shirts or eccentrics, it seems perfectly natural, but F. P. A. isn't at all the kind of man who is usually found in such company. He never planned to keep a diary, and probably he never would have, if he hadn't been pushed into doing it. Unlike Pepys and John Hone and the rest of them, F. P. A. is the conductor of a newspaper column. No young roc in a nest ever was harder to feed than a column, and any man who has one gets desperate trying to fill it. A column looks easy to laymen, it isn't as large as a church door, but it has to be filled every day.

F. P. A. is one of that little band of—on the whole happy—martyrs who have kept a column going for years. Twenty-five years in his case. To do this he has been obliged to put into it just about all he had—that is, all he had of a day to day nature. He has turned himself inside out. After once starting a diary to help fill his column, he had to keep on. He had to be honest, and candid too, helplessly honest, partly because, at bottom at least, he is that kind of man, and partly because he was too pressed for time to dress up his views or conceal his real feelings. This pressure also made him write down all sorts of little everyday things that popped into his mind—things that don't look as though they had any great importance or value. Yet just because he had to fill his diary with things of that kind, God knows what precious bits future generations will find in it.

The one secret that is usually hidden from us, in spite of all our thousands of records, is what kind of stuff popped into men's minds in previous centuries. What were the day to day thoughts and vexations of Helen of Troy, or of Noah, or of Genghis Khan, or of a prominent Aztec, or of some early Druid. "The woad is worse than ever this year, but a man must keep up his stains. The public at Stonehenge expects it . . . I do wish our victims weren't so noisy . . . It was cold, dismal work for us Druids at sunrise this morning."

It's a thousand pities that there wasn't a newspaper in Rome in old times, one that a capitalist like Maecenas might have owned, with a column in it for Horace. Like F. P. A., Horace liked people and enjoyed daily life, and met all sorts of characters, and played games and eyed pretty girls, and observed what was going on in the world, and was preyed upon by moods, good and bad, and gave himself up to them, and fell out of them, and marched or danced on again. In short he had gusto. Like F. P. A., he had to earn money, but all that Maecenas ever made him do was to sing for his supper. He didn't have to keep a daily diary. He had it easy, that man did.

There are times when F. P. A. says he wishes that he too had it easy. No, No! The rest of us don't want to be hard on him, but we can't let him stop.

Second-Hand Fury

STEEL—DICTATOR. By Harvey O'Connor. New York: The John Day Co. 1935. $3.

Reviewed by E. D. KENNEDY

THE steel industry makes an excellent target for any writer who wishes to add to the large body of anti-industrial literature which has become so popular during the depression. Steel is unenlightened in its attitude toward labor and the expression of its attitude is often brutal. Employment is on a basis of hard work for low wages or no work for no wages. Few industries have relied more completely on artificially maintained prices. The United States Steel Corporation itself has been a conspicuous example of an inability to avoid depression deficits and of a failure in even the narrow corporate endeavor which limits itself to the satisfaction of the stockholder.

Yet there is little that is original and little that is significant in Mr. O'Connor's attack on the steel industry. It suffers—as so many books of its type suffer—from being the echo of a protest rather than the expression of a protest. Mr. O'Connor appears to have read a great deal of what has been printed about the steel industry. He has dug up all the old bones in the industry's history and glued them together to form a skeleton that is too familiar to be terrifying. We read again of the Homestead strike, of the original water in the Steel Corporation's stock, of steel's wartime profits, of how this country fought to save the House of Morgan, of labor's betrayal through the formation of company unions, of the bonuses paid to Eugene Grace of Bethlehem Steel, of William Shearer's malign influence on naval limitation conferences. No doubt there will be many readers to whom Mr. O'Connor's information will be news, but it is unfortunate that they will derive their learning from an extremely unanalytic and emotional source. Mr. O'Connor can interpret social injustice only in terms of personal malice—thus he says that "the House of Morgan never ceased its meticulous attention to the Steel Corporation, from whose teats the elder Morgan waxed prodigious."

Mr. O'Connor's closest approach to making a contribution to his subject is found in his argument that the steel industry is moving "through fear and force to fascism." This alliterative hypothesis depends upon the contention that price control exerted through the Iron and Steel Institute is fascism with respect to corporate units in the industry and that labor control through company unions is fascism with respect to labor. But according to Mr. O'Connor steel prices have been fixed almost since the formation of the Steel Corporation, so there seems little room for progress in this direction. Nor is it easy to see how labor in company

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unions can be worse off than labor in no unions at all. Furthermore, Mr. O'Connor sets up fascism as steel's only answer to depression. But general recovery—and particularly recovery in the automobile business—has so stimulated steel orders that the steel industry will undoubtedly show a profit for the present year without having made any notable recent advances in the fascistic direction.

Everyone who can endure Mr. O'Connor's prose (which would flunk any freshman) ought to read his book for the sake of the material collected in it. But they ought to read also one of the equally superficial knee-bending studies of industry of the kind that flourished in pre-depression times. Of the two, Mr. O'Connor has the more social attitude and his conclusions are somewhat less misleading. But his book is so much a journalistic compilation, so little a judicial inquiry, that its significance is sadly impaired. It is full of wired sound and second-hand fury.

E. D. Kennedy is an associate editor of Fortune.

Cyclone in the Pacific

VICTORIOUS TROY, or THE HURRYING ANGEL. By John Masefield. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1935. $2.50.

Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT

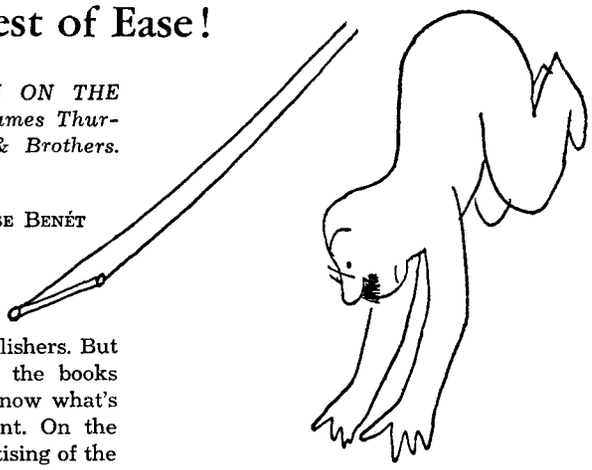
THIS is not one of the Poet Laureate's books about Troy; it is one of his books about ships. Troy, the luxurious, half-Oriental city of polygamous robber-barons, like that other Oriental city Carthage, had one great virtue worth to the world's imagination all the rest; she was conquered. And so, to Mr. Masefield as to many other generous hearts, Troy has become a symbol of the under-dog, the weaker side, and he has put her name to this story in which the weaker side wins; for this is simply the story of how a ship was brought through a storm.

It is one of Mr. Masefield's best sea stories. The appalling confusion of a ship at sea has never been better conveyed. It steers between the preoccupation with ill-luck and defeat which in "Sard Harker" made one feel that the cards were almost ludicrously stacked, and the over-easy success of "The Taking of the *Gry*." And it brings one of the greatest gifts that books can give, an imaginative enlargement of one's experience, as close as possible to undergoing the thing itself. The only books that can add to one's life in that way are those whose authors have, like Mr. Masefield, the rare combination of first-hand knowledge of some field, and the literary skill to convey it. Here are both; and when you have read this, you will know, better than any one who has not been there, what it is like to be in a dismasted ship in a storm in the South Pacific.

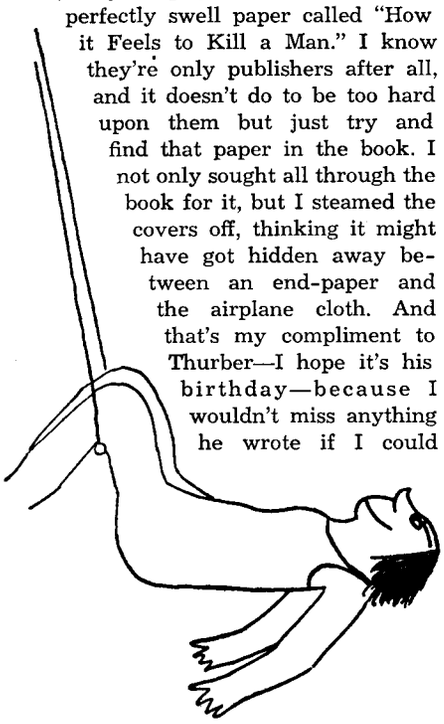
With the Greatest of Ease!

THE MIDDLE-AGED MAN ON THE FLYING TRAPEZE. By James Thurber. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1935. $2.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT



THERE are two mistakes in Thurber's latest. The first and worst is a mistake by the publishers. But then publishers seldom read the books they publish. If they really know what's in them it's quite by accident. On the jacket-flap, and in their advertising of the book, they keep genially referring to a perfectly swell paper called "How it Feels to Kill a Man." I know they're only publishers after all, and it doesn't do to be too hard upon them but just try and find that paper in the book. I not only sought all through the book for it, but I steamed the covers off, thinking it might have got hidden away between an end-paper and the airplane cloth. And that's my compliment to Thurber—I hope it's his birthday—because I wouldn't miss anything he wrote if I could possibly help it. I asked the black cat on page 97, as she looked like the Witch of Endor. I asked the three veiled ladies on page 90. I thought I discovered the gent on page 60 putting it away in the trunk on the back of a Poindexter. Nope. Now *you* try and find it. It makes a good game for a rainy day.



DRAWINGS BY JAMES THURBER
From "The Middle-Aged Man on the Flying Trapeze."

The second mistake is Mr. Thurber's. When they put up the monument to Smurch the round-the-world flier, surely they wouldn't have carved on its base a tiny *bi*-plane, as Thurber has drawn it. He distinctly says Smurch flew "a second-hand, single-motored Bresthaven Dragon-Fly III *mono*plane." It took me a long time to get over this mistake. I kept rushing up and down the room, barking at intervals.

Most of the people who haw-haw at Thurber will be puzzled by parts of this book. What should they make, for instance, of "The Man on the Train" or "One Is a Wanderer"? They will enjoy "The Funniest Man You Ever Saw," because that is precisely their idea of humor, but the peculiar atmospheric effect of "The Black Magic of Barney Heller" will doubtless escape them. I think on the whole Mr. Thurber writes best when the story springs out of his recollection of his early days or present personal experience. "Snapshot of a Dog" is one of the best things ever written of a dog. "A Portrait of Aunt Ida" and "The Luck of Jad Peters" are rich and rare. Thurber's wholly imaginary stories are always funny and well-turned, but they're apt to be thin. His parodies are pretty good, but that's all. But when he wants to be excoriating (in a nice way) he can certainly kid the pants off his subject. Take "Something to Say," the portrait of one of those infernal pests posing as geniuses with one or two of whom every person who has ever worked in editorial offices or the publishing business is only too familiar. That paper did my soul good; for I am a darkly-muttering angry man. Thurber's Art? What shall I say. It swings between inadequacy and positive inspiration. And now he likes to draw snow falling. He's gone slightly dotty about drawing snow falling. And the little group, at the end of the Table of Contents, of the tiny man escaping from the huge women —genius, my friends, sheer genius.

P.S. I know where that missing paper is now. It's in the box at the end of the book—page 227—and the bloodhound is sniffing at the box. Or is it a beagle? Or is it a basset-hound?

Write Your Own Ticket

Last Reminder

This is our last possible chance to remind you to vote on the Best and Worst Novel, Biography, etc., of the year. The ballot blanks were printed in *The Saturday Review* of November 2. *All returns must be in next week.* The results will be printed in the Christmas issue, December 7. If you have not yet sent in your ballot, please do so at once. Write your own ticket, and mail it to The Managing Editor, Saturday Review, 25 W. 45 St., New York City.

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Short Stories, 1935

THE BEST SHORT STORIES 1935 and the Yearbook of the American Short Story. Edited by Edward J. O'Brien. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1935. $2.50.

THESE STORIES WENT TO MARKET. By Vernon McKenzie. New York: Robert M. McBride & Co. 1935. $2.

O. HENRY MEMORIAL AWARD PRIZE STORIES OF 1935. Edited by Harry Hansen. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1935. $2.50.

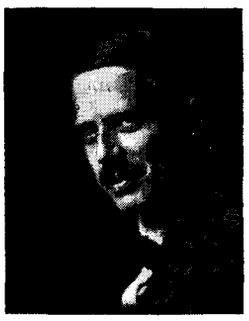
Reviewed by ALFRED DASHIELL

THE first two of these books illustrate two contrasting currents in the American short story. Mr. O'Brien picks "stories which have rendered life imaginatively in organic substance and artistic form." Dean McKenzie teaches short story writing as a trade. Mr. O'Brien's selections are taken largely from the "little magazines," and his standard may be said to be anti-commercial as well as non-commercial. Dean McKenzie regards a short story as successful if it sells. The stories in his book are "first" stories which have achieved publication in magazines ranging from *Topnotch* to the *Saturday Evening Post*, written by his pupils at the University of Washington. Mr. O'Brien takes three stories from *Scribner's Magazine*, two from the *Atlantic*, and one each from *Vanity Fair*, *Harper's Bazaar*, and the *American Mercury*. The remaining nineteen stories come from the little magazines (if we include the somewhat anomalous *Story* in that group).

"The Best Short Stories 1935" (which really covers the calendar year 1934) is Mr. O'Brien's twenty-first annual selection. It is especially significant in that it marks a new note in Mr. O'Brien's thinking. Since the early 1920's he has annually registered his protest against the commercialized short story with its hackneyed pattern and its lack of relation to life. He has with great energy encouraged the "little magazines" and the writers of the left. This year he calls a halt. He suggests a moratorium for two years on new little magazines and points out the sterilizing effect on the tendency to legislate politically on the writer's subject matter. This tendency which he designates as fascist is evident especially in left-wing circles. "The revolution in the American short story," then, has gone beyond the bounds envisioned by the leader. The dull realism of the little magazines proves as stultifying as the sugar-syrup of the mass-circulation periodicals. Mr. O'Brien's warning is salutary. One wishes that it had been uttered sooner. One wonders also whether Mr. O'Brien's preoccupation with novelty and new writers does not still cause a lack of balance in his selections. Does he think that seventy per-cent of all the best short stories appear in the little magazines?

HARRY HANSEN

Nevertheless, this year's volume is more readable than previous collections in the series and contains some of the most interesting and significant work of the year. The editor mentions especially among the new writers Allan Seager's "This Town and Salamanca" and the work of William Saroyan and Dorothy McCleary. Seager's story is excellent. That it contributes "a new dimension to American fiction" is open to question. Seager promises much, his output is as yet slim. Saroyan's story, "Resurrection of a Life," is one of his familiar meandering, egocentric reveries which has virtues and faults almost equally balanced. In contrast to Seager, Saroyan is too prolific. Unless he is to prove a literary comet, the tail of which is already disappearing in the West, he should write less and think more about what and how he is writing. Dorothy McCleary's story, "Sunday Morning," is informed with humor, warmth, and human sympathy.



EDWARD J. O'BRIEN

Examples of the work of Thomas Wolfe, William Faulkner, Erskine Caldwell, Morley Callaghan, Paul Horgan, Sara Haardt, and Nancy Hale, among the well-established, are included. Why the fantastic "Lo!" is chosen from the nine stories by Faulkner given three-star rating is incomprehensible. "The Sun and the Rain," by Thomas Wolfe, is an excellent choice, especially because it shows what the author can do in brief space.

Two of the most attractive stories in the book are the late Sara Haardt's "Little White Girl," dealing with a Southern child's introduction to racial division by sudden separation from her little Negro playmate, and "Suns That Our Hearts Harden," by Carlton Brown, a father-and-son story (of which there are three in the book).

Whit Burnett's twenty-thousand-word "Division" seems a good, if simple, idea developed to tedious length and taking up a disproportionate amount of space.

"The Party Next Door," by Ernest Brace, is one of the most firmly constructed and satisfying stories in the book. One notes that Mr. Brace had experience as editor of *Adventure* before he devoted himself to editing the *Plowshare*. Contrasting his story with some of the futile arty efforts in the book, the value of a good course of sprouts in a tougher fiction school than that offered by the little magazines becomes apparent.

The stories in Dean McKenzie's book show some talent and much superficial cleverness. Here we have the opposite extreme but a somewhat similar effect. The teacher's rigorous insistence that stories must be written for the market may well serve to stifle whatever talent there is. Several of the twelve stories are entertaining, most of them are time-killers. The best are "The Blind Commander," by Marion Thornton, "Home-Town Laughter," by John Reid Byers, and the cynical "Wedding Party," by Grace Gierin. Accompanying the stories are an introduction by Dean McKenzie and case histories of the origin, development, and sale of the stories themselves. It is a good, practical volume for the beginning tradesmen of letters and will probably result in increased enrolment in Dean McKenzie's classes. If such things could be arranged, it might be well for some of Mr. O'Brien's protégés to go to school to Dean McKenzie for a semester, while some of the talented from the McKenzie seminar took a course under Mr. O'Brien.

The new O. Henry volume occupies solid ground between the two extremes. Mr. Hansen is not afraid of a pattern story and his choices come from the radical *Anvil* and the *American Magazine* as well. The judges, Tess Slesinger, Clifton Fadiman, and Joseph Henry Jackson, awarded first prize to Kay Boyle's "White Horses of Vienna" and second to "The Home Place" by Dorothy Thomas—both from *Harper's*. The short short story prize went to "John the Six" by Josephine Johnson, from the *Atlantic*.

No stories and only four writers appearing in the O'Brien book are included here. The authors who achieve the double distinction are Thomas Wolfe, William Saroyan, Louis Mamet, Dorothy McCleary. The two anthologies together present the work of forty-two writers, a sizeable delegation of America's best. Under Mr. Hansen's direction, the O. Henry collections have become less conventional. The O'Brien books, in a sense, have become hedged about by the cult of the new, and this year the O. Henry collection wins, on points. It has fewer statistics but is perhaps more significant. It is an excellent cross section of the good short story writers, representing achievement rather than promise. It is substantial and entertaining.

Alfred Dashiell is one of the editors of Scribner's Magazine. *Recently he wrote a chapter on the contemporary short story for the revised edition of Henry S. Canby's "Study of the Short Story."*

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The Bowling Green by Christopher Morley

Kipling at His Best

AT the top of the Christmas List, and not to be missed on any account by those who know that R. K. has, when he needs it, the greatest of all magics in words, is Doubleday's new omnibus volume *A Kipling Pageant* (936 pp., $3.00). It is a thesaurus of selections from the stories and poems; in the choices there can be room for some small bickering, as Sir Nigel used to say (they were made not by the author but by the publisher). But what makes this book unique is Kipling's magnificent preface, done in his best Hindustani manner. It is in the form of a letter to the publisher—"Being the Instructions to the Nakhoda, the Captain, of This Ship." Writing in the vein of an old Eastern trader R. K. addresses Nelson Doubleday:—

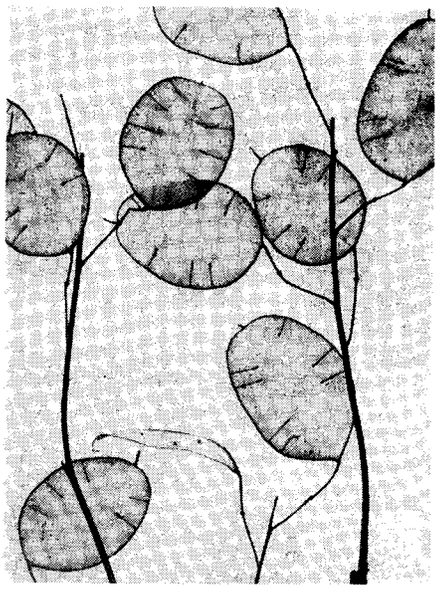
"In those days when neither thy Father's beard nor mine needed the *henna* I gave thy Father commission to sell, on my account, my goods in bulk or single to the Western ports of this world. For that trade we built and equipped a little sailing-ship which we both loved. And her venture was felicitous.

"Begins now, after very many tides, a voyage for thee, his son, in a ship laden with pieces and patterns and portions and naqshas (samples) of my wares, both new and old, as those have issued from beneath my hands during the procession of fifty years. Whereof, through forty and five, thy Father and I ran our Western trade together—ship and cargo—tack for tack.

"This new ship here, is fitted according to the reported increase of knowledge among mankind. Namely, she is cumbered, end to end, with bells and trumpets and clocks and wires which, it has been told to me, can call Voices out of the air or the waters to con the ship while her crew sleep. But sleep *thou* lightly, O Nakhoda! It has not yet been told to me that the Sea has ceased to be the Sea."

It would be impudence to quote further, though I would happily copy out the whole of this gorgeous salvo, complete both in wisdom and good humor; one of the finest letters one has ever read. With witty Eastern symbolism he continues the figment of the old merchant counselling his shipmaster and repeats the bill of instruction he wrote to Frank Doubleday in 1897. This is Kipling at his finest, both in wit and feeling. And his Oriental comments on American kindliness, on the Depression and on "the voices out of the air" are to be heard.

This is certainly among our tongue's most winning prefaces.



"THE HERB LUNARIA"
Photo by Willy Zielke, Munich

Ampersands

&&& If we were a cheesemonger we would use a quotation from Ben Gunn, late of *Treasure Island*, in our advertising. &&& Mr. H. A. Calahan has written a quite readable sequel called *Back to Treasure Island* (Vanguard Press) reintroducing the same familiar characters, with the addition of John Silver's wife. &&& A 12-year-old damsel of our acquaintance has been reading it with enthusiasm. Ben Gunn retains his passion for cheese; Squire Trelawney loses his money in the South Sea Bubble; they all go back to the island in the good old Hispaniola; and John Silver loses his other leg. &&& The Seamen's Institute, 25 South Street, has coached and rehearsed quartets of unemployed sailors in singing the old sailing chanteys; they may be engaged by clubs or groups desiring a delightful maritime entertainment. &&& Also the Institute has a 15-minute phonograph record of chanteys, available for a $10 rental. This is a good cause; further information from Rev. Harold Kelley, 25 South Street, N. Y. City. &&& Harry A. Franck in his *Trailing Cortez Through Mexico* mentioned that in a Mexican country church he saw an image adorned with a Phi Beta Kappa key. This aroused the interest of a reader in Milwaukee who lost such a key while on a trip to Mexico last summer and believes it must be his. &&& It interested us also, as we lost one on the beach at Brightwaters, L. I., on a picnic about ten years ago and still expect it some day to turn up in a clambake. &&& In meditating the Christmas List, some may be glad to be reminded that the Mosher books still go on under the ministry of Miss Flora MacDonald Lamb (45 Exchange Place, Portland, Maine). It was Mr. Mosher who introduced so many of our generation to George Gissing, and the Mosher edition of *Ryecroft* ($5) remains a perfect gift. &&& How characteristic of G. G. that he was fonder of cats than dogs. &&& We note with pleasure that *Sirenica* by W. Compton Leith is still in print in the Mosher catalogue ($3), one of the most subtle smelling-salts in modern prose. &&& We agree with good old G. A. Baker & Co. (480 Lexington Ave.) that *The Illiterate Digest* was Will Rogers' best book (1924). Will's correspondence with Funk & Wagnalls' lawyer, when that firm said Will's title was an infringement on the *Literary Digest*, is as good as some of Dickens; it should be classic in all Law Schools. For instance:—

> This is the first that I knew my Title of the Illiterate Digest was an infringement on yours as they mean the direct opposite. If a magazine was published called YES and another bird put one out called NO, I suppose he would be infringeing. But you are a Lawyer and it's your business to change the meaning of words, so I lose before I start. . . . you inform your Clients that if they ever take up Rope Throwing or chewing gum that I will consider it a direct infringement of my rights and will protect it with one of the best Kosher Lawyers in Oklahoma. . . ."

&&& G. A. Baker have 5 copies of the autographed edition of this book, each with a humorous inscription. &&& Our mention of Dean Lyman's biography of Thomas Fuller (*The Great Tom Fuller*, Univ. of California Press, $2.25) brings an inquiry from L. L. D. as to where Fuller made his remark on the herb Lunaria. It is in the essay on The Wise Statesman in *The Holy State*. &&& Fuller wrote:—*What they say of the herb Lunaria ceremoniously gathered at some set times, that laid upon any lock, it makes it flie open, is most true of drunkennesse, unbolting the most important secrets.* &&& To reinforce this wise saw we reprint a fine photograph which we have saved a long while for some provocation. &&& I had been reading proofs of a novel by an eminent philosopher; a novel I found thoroughly enchanting; and the ground and basis of the extreme pleasure it gave me was the complete naiveté and unreality of its plot and characters. Here is a story, I said to myself, written by one of the acknowledged strong minds and phosphoresque pens of our generation, and it seems, to an experienced novel-

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WHITTLESEY HOUSE
McGraw-Hill Building New York

reader, completely (and most delightfully) divorced from life itself; from the way people actually and indubitably behave. &&& I was very likely wrong; yet it seemed to me one more proof of the appalling (yet somehow humorous) truth that Philosophy and the Categories and the Absolute and Pure Reason and even good old Kaloskagathos (poor limmer) have little to do with life as it is lived. &&& Have I got to be, I said to myself, what the French call the Emissary Goal to insist upon this hellish dualism? &&& Man lives, alas, by impulse and along the epicycloid curve of economics; he cherishes his errors the way a puppy loves a musty old pair of socks. &&& Once in Chicago I saw an empty moving-picture theatre; to inform everyone that nothing was playing there they had jumbled all the electric letters on the marquee into alphabet hash; but I made a note of what it said because is suggested the accidental symbolic drama of our time. &&& It said ICARDNUTURUXIAU OVADZFOORTSSY. &&& Miss Anne McLean, of Dayton, Ohio, is the best accordion player in the American book trade. She should be interested to know that C. A. Stonehill, Jr., 26 Museum Street, London W. C. 1, offers for £10 the accordion (with mother-of-pearl keys) which belonged to the late Mrs. Hargreaves, the Alice of *Alice in Wonderland*. "A very personal relic," says Mr. Stonehill; "perhaps Alice used to play this instrument to Lewis Carroll." &&& It is interesting to note that the management of the Book of the Month Club says "We consider *Kristin Lavransdatter* the best book our judges have ever selected." &&& We read with some apprehensiveness the circulars of the aviation lines listing the increasing luxuries available; the dressing rooms, sleeper berths, cocktails, and fried chicken dinners; and occasionally we wonder whether they are going to make the same mistake the steamship companies did, viz. let luxury run ahead of mere safety? &&& The best conclusion for a job of writing is the old monkish colophon quoted by Goodspeed's always interesting monthly pamphlet—*Nunc scripsi totum: pro Christo da mihi potum.*

"A Fable Agreed Upon"

"In 1908 I was awakened by the squeals of a pig who had broken his-her leg. He-she was one of a herd being driven to a slaughter house at Third Street above Girard Avenue, Philadelphia, on the site of what once was a vegetarian church. A shipload of vegetarians came from Manchester to Philadelphia in 1817 and worshipt in a little building, first of wood and then of brick (1823-1890). They were an offshoot of the Swedenborgian movement, headed by William Cowherd and William Metcalfe. . . . In 1890 their church edifice was sold, through an agent, to the butcher next door, who was the only one willing to give them enough money to move to a better neighborhood. I attended the church (1887-1890), saw the infernal transformation with my own eyes.

"The midnight squeals of 1908 brought forth my *Open Court* article *Pigs in a Vegetarian Sunday School*. The article ended:

" 'Every word of this story is literally true. Even Mark Twain could not invent anything funnier than facts. Indeed it often seems to me that the world itself is a huge Rabelaisian joke.'

"It was William Metcalfe, the Philadelphia vegetarian pastor, who converted Sylvester Graham (of Graham bread fame) to the humane diet. . . .

"Napoleon was right: history is a fable agreed upon."

ALBERT J. EDMUNDS.

Henry Ford was a good deal snorted at when he said the same thing ("History is bunk"). Sometimes, in calmer afterthought, it occurs that Henry said better than he knew.

It's the names of the two vegetarian pastors that seem to add the capsheaf of felicity to Mr. Edmunds' anecdote.

Mussolini vs. Italy

(*Continued from page* 4)

quantity. Wherever is an exceptional amount of energy, there is genius. This broadening of the definition, and of the feeling thereto connected, accounts for the overflowing of hero-worship and genius-worship not only into the field of egotistic, adventurous statesmanship, but even into that of underworld criminality.

It is beyond doubt that Mussolini has energy, lust for power, capacity for conquering and accumulating power. Hence the lure of his personality for those who have not freed themselves from the conception, and idolatry, of genius, as sheer energy.

His allegedly Napoleonic or Caesarian features appeal to the rank and file of writers, even when they have spent their lives in behalf of human and democratic ideals. There were many *trahisons de clercs*. These writers, more or less effectively, helped to rivet the chains of the Italian people and to pave the way to the brink of the precipice. And many read with something like distress the judgment brought on Fascism by H. G. Wells in "The Shape of Things to Come." Wells, the historian who had not surrendered to the fascination even of a Napoleon!

> The Fascist dictatorship of Mussolini in Italy [wrote he] had something in it of more enduring type than most of the other supersessions of parliamentary methods. It rose not as a personal usurpation but as the expression of an organization with a purpose and a sort of doctrine of its own. The intellectual content of Fascism was limited, nationalist and romantic; its methods, especially in the opening phase, were violent and dreadful; but at least it insisted upon discipline and public service for its members. It appeared as a counter movement to chaotic labor communism, but its support of the still-surviving monarchy and the Church

(*Continued on page* 22)

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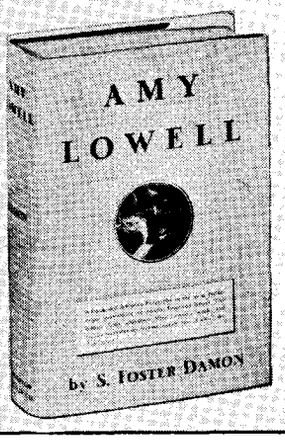
Recommended to S. R. L. Readers



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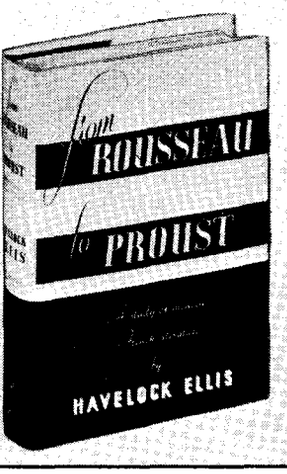

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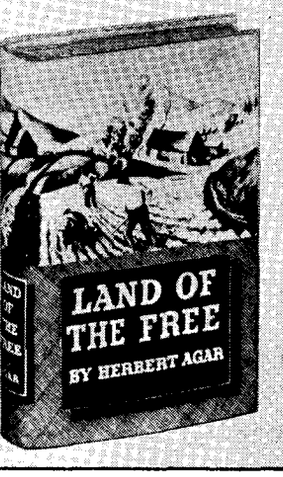

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The New Books

Fiction

ROYAL PURPLE. By Bertita Harding. Bobbs-Merrill. 1935. $2.50.

Mrs. Harding, who in "Phantom Crown" wrote the biography of Maximilian of Mexico, gives us here a frankly fictionized account of King Alexander and Queen Draga of Serbia. If these principals cannot command our respect as does Maximilian, still there is promising material for an unashamedly sensational novel in the insignificant little king, put on the throne as a boy by a palace revolution, damned in a fair wife, and finally, together with her, hunted through his palace and butchered (the bald transcription of the inquest is not the least impressive page in a generally over-written book). It is at best a sordid story, but there is a certain piquancy in the splendor and squalor of that brigand-begotten little court. Unfortunately Miss Harding has let the sensational possibilities run altogether away with her. In her fictionized version she tries to find too much significance in her incidents, and worse than this, she sometimes (or so it appears to any reasonable conjecture) makes up incidents out of whole cloth. The result is a sensational, florid, and sordid book.

B. D.

EXTRAVAGANZAS. By Ronald Firbank. Coward-McCann. 1935. $2.

This is the first time "The Artificial Princess" and "The Eccentricities of Cardinal Pirelli" have been published in this country. They are early work of Firbank's. The first-named was never published during his lifetime; but Coleridge Kennard, who writes the introduction for this book, had the manuscript. It is quite a charming device of spun sugar, with less innuendo than Firbank developed later. "Cardinal Pirelli" has more, and is also by far the more difficult job. It distinctly impresses one with Firbank's ability as a writer. It seems a pity that he never developed out of the slyly salacious —but his salacity was of so delicate a type that it seldom becomes offensive. He had the ability to write with a style and beauty of language at his best, as well as with a subtle wit, that puts to shame many writers of our time.

W. R. B.

Miscellaneous

BOXING IN ART AND LITERATURE. Edited by William D. Cox. Reynal & Hitchcock. 1935. $5.

From Homer to Hemingway in literature, and from a Minoan vase to a painting by Dame Laura Knight, the long and honorable history of fist-fighting is here illustrated in its major episodes. The editor has gleaned skilfully from a vast field, and the resultant anthology is interesting not merely to "the fancy," but also to the general reader. In the Middle Ages and Renaissance the record runs almost dry. Doubtless there were abundant fisticuffs between Virgil, Martial, and Theocritus and Richard Steele, Dr. Johnson, William Hazlitt, and Lord Byron, but these obscure mills escaped literary celebration. The editor has dug up much unfamiliar matter, even from broadside ballads. In the hundred years past there is an embarrassment of material, and any selection is necessarily personal and arbitrary. The present writer would have been glad to read Katherine Fullerton Gerould's account of the Dempsey-Carpentier fight alongside of Irvin Cobb's. No mere man has so well caught the paradoxical stateliness of ringside ceremony. The book, in largest octavo, with its clear text, green and maroon cloth binding, with labels, is really a novel and up-to-date gift book, and as such should find favor.

F. J. M.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
MURDER IN TRIPLICATE *Hugh Austin* (Crime Club: $2.)	Rapid succession of gruesomely trademarked daylight murders at houseparty solved *prestissimo* by P. D. Quint.	Three hour solution of triple crime with curious convolutions done to stream-line, supercharged talk, and action.	Read it!
MURDER IN THE SENATE *Geoffrey Coffin* (Dodge: $2.)	Admiral and lovely *intrigante* shot: *attaché* and senator poisoned: Washington gripped by Nazified mobs. Scott Stuart settles all.	Couple of novelties in scientific crime detection, a new kind of poison, and constant palpitating action.	Readable
DEATH OF A FIRST MATE *Charles Barry* (Dutton: $2.)	Generally disliked "first" of *S. S. Baynes* dead in Cork harbor. Detective Clancy blarneys way to killer.	Fresh Irish background —land and sea; humor; good characters; baffling puzzle — with hey-what's-this ending.	Better than most

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It's Time to Begin Selecting the Books You Plan to Give for Christmas!

The Atlantic $5,000 Prize Book

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By MARI SANDOZ

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A BALANCED RATION FOR A WEEK'S READING

THE HARP WEAVER. By Edna St. Vincent Millay. *Harpers.*

THE EDUCATION OF HENRY ADAMS. *Houghton Mifflin.*

THE CONSTANT NYMPH. By Margaret Kennedy. *Doubleday, Doran.*

Katherine Mansfield's Works

E. L. B. of Kansas City, Mo., *wants the names of all of Katherine Mansfield's books and of the publishers both English and American who brought them out. She wishes also the name of the English publisher of Swinburne's essay on Blake.*

ALL of Katherine Mansfield's books were originally brought out in this country by Knopf and in England by Constable, with the exception of her translation of Gorky's REMINISCENCES OF LEONID ANDREIEV which appeared in England from the press of Heinemann and in America from that of Random House. Of them several have since been issued in cheap reprint edition by the original publishers, and GARDEN PARTY comes also in the Garden City and Modern Library series. IN A GERMAN PENSION, BLISS, THE DOVE'S NEST, SOMETHING CHILDISH (in the American edition entitled THE LITTLE GIRL), and THE ALOE, NOVELS AND NOVELISTS, the two volumes of LETTERS, and the JOURNAL were published by Knopf and Constable. The POEMS were issued here by Knopf, and I presume in England by Constable, though I cannot find them so listed.

Swinburne's BLAKE, to pass on to the second part of E. L. B.'s question, curiously enough I find ascribed only to Scribners and presume therefore that it was published in England in a collection of Swinburne's essays to which another title applied.

A Headless Body

A few weeks ago, in the middle of a reply to the request of *Mrs. W. A. C. of Penn Yan, N. Y.*, for a program in contemporary literature, I was forced by the exigencies of make-up at the eleventh hour to stop abruptly with poetry suspended in air. Just as abruptly I return the portion of my answer which I then chopped off to these columns, merely prefacing the appearance of the poor waif with the statement that it was outlining some specific programs for the discussion of poetry and drama. And so really to begin, as the Latin books used to say, in *medias res.*

A special meeting could be allotted to poets such as Robert Frost, Amy Lowell, Edgar Lee Masters, and Vachel Lindsay, another to a group of writers of narrative poetry like Edwin Arlington Robinson, Stephen Vincent Benét, and Archibald MacLeish (all of whom belong also in other categories), a third to the two women poets who have been outstanding in the last few years, Elinor Wylie and Edna St. Vincent Millay, and a fourth to a group which would include William Rose Benét, Louis Untermeyer, Carl Sandburg, all of them leading poets.

In the drama, with Barrett H. Clark's STUDY OF THE MODERN DRAMA (Appleton-Century) as background reference, one book, it seems to me, would serve admirably as a pivot for discussion—that is the just issued PULITZER PRIZE PLAYS (Random House) which presents the dramas which have been given the stamp of superior merit during the last seventeen years. The club could spend as much or as little time as it chose on these, according them either individual meetings, or taking up several in an afternoon.

Problems of 1905

A. C. of Columbia, Mo., *wants "a clear and interesting account of the problems contemporary with* 1905, *stressing religious and social questions." "Is there," he asks, "anything dealing with the period that compares with Allen's* ONLY YESTERDAY?"

Yes—Mark Sullivan's OUR TIMES (Scribners) which broke ground in a field in which Mr. Allen has ably followed. Mr. Sullivan's work is in several volumes of which the last appears this week and the first covers the period in which A. C. is interested. It is an excellent journalistic chronicle, sprightly informed, rapid, which takes in its stride the picturesque as well as the factual and overflows with animated detail.

The
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By AUDREY
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Race Relations in Chicago Politics

NEGRO POLITICIANS: THE RISE OF NEGRO POLITICS IN CHICAGO. By Harold F. Gosnell. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. 1935. $3.50.

Reviewed by ROBERT C. BROOKS

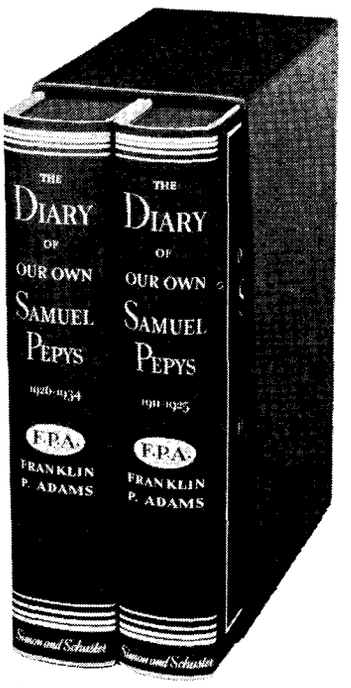
IN the early days of emancipation certain dusk-hued students of Atlanta University were asked what message they wished to send to the Northern benefactors of that institution. Their answer, "We'se aris'n," might well serve as sub-title to Professor Gosnell's present volume. It describes thoroughly and critically the development of Negro politics in Chicago, discussing the "Black-Belt" as a factional battleground, the make-up and operation of the Negro political machine, its relations to the underworld, and, finally, the records so far made by Negroes in elective and appointive offices, in civil service positions, the police department, the schools, and the post office. In addition Professor Gosnell presents detailed sketches of a large number of Negro leaders. Among the latter the best known nationally is Oscar DePriest, "race-man" and militant organizer, who was a member of Congress from 1929 to 1935. Although white, William Hale Thompson is portrayed at full length in a capital chapter. Perhaps the most disheartening thing in the book is the fact that Big Bill the Builder was regarded as "a second Lincoln" by many of his more fervent colored admirers.

So far as the slum-ward techniques described by Professor Gosnell are concerned Negro politics appears to be no blacker than white politics. Indeed the former is exalted to some extent by certain idealistic elements, notably race loyalty and the common struggle against innumerable social discriminations. Professor Gosnell's account of the ups and downs of communist propaganda among the colored people of Chicago is so admirable and judicious that one may well wish him to undertake a similar study in the more backward regions of the South.

Throughout the book he has not hesitated to set down the unfavorable aspects of the situation; moreover he shows repeatedly that with each advance of the Negro in politics there is a tightening of white opposition. All in all, however, the achievements of his colored leaders are sufficient to encourage one regarding the future of the race.

Since Negroes have "aris'n" to greater heights in Chicago than anywhere else in the United States, Professor Gosnell's detailed and discriminating record of what they have accomplished is of more than purely local significance; obviously it foreshadows what may happen in other Northern cities where they form a substantial minority of the population. For this reason it will be read by leaders of the race with deep interest and satisfaction. Whites who live south of the Mason and Dixon line will be equally interested, doubtless also somewhat horrified. To general readers the book may seem rather overloaded with facts, perhaps too carefully documented—there are no fewer than 100 footnotes to the chapter on DePriest alone! Such readers will be rewarded, however, by a large number of priceless political anecdotes and by many curious revelations of Negro character set in a novel environment. The particular appeal of the book is, of course, to political scientists. They will appreciate the intensiveness with which Professor Gosnell has cultivated this field, ploughing and reploughing it for five years, turning up every scrap of material from documentary, literary, and journalistic sources, attending innumerable meetings, and interviewing every type of Negro leader from the highest to the lowest. Above all, however, "Negro Politicians" is a work of distinction because it was drawn from life itself. As such it is full of the dust and sweat, the stratagems and spoils, of political battle in Chicago's "Black-Belt."

"Negro Politicians" has just received the John Anisfield Award of $1000 as the best book in the field of racial relations. Robert C. Brooks, who reviews it, is on the faculty of Swarthmore College.



Sinclair Lewis says: "It is not merely a book, it is the only book in which I can re-live the twenty-five world-changing years during which I have known New York—its citizens, its theatres, its amazingly changing streets."

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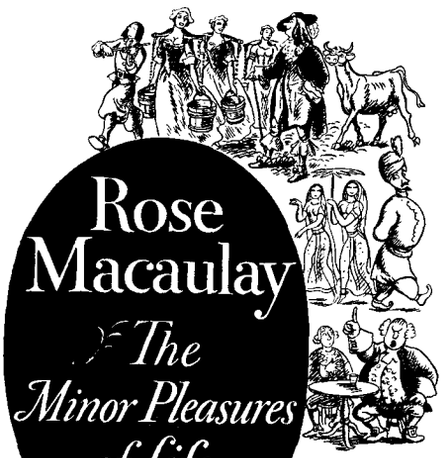

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*This is a slight exaggeration, but these columns have sold donkeys and parrots.

WHAT HAVE YOU GOT?

The PHŒNIX NEST

BY WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

TWO young ladies (I presume) in *The Nation* have lately been having a barrel of fun for themselves, pointing out how fatuous are most reviewers of books in New York, when not downright venal. Recently the *Saturday Review* was laid out by them on the operating table, and several whacks were taken at it with a blunt instrument. The Phoenix got a good one on the occiput. This column—you had better know the worst right now—is "half-coy" and also "half-intimate." How it manages to preserve so delicate a balance is entirely the secret of my own genius, and I'm not going to give the recipe away. It is also "boisterous." Furthermore, it is laid at my door that I once—but that was in earlier infamy, when I was connected with *The Century Magazine*, of—to me, at least—blessed and amusing memory—I once sent back one of *Edna St. Vincent Millay's* best sonnets, saying I liked certain lines in it. Maybe I did, I have lived an evil life. But, even though I coveted it, I never had the final authority of rejection on the old *Century*. Nor have I any recollection of the incident. And certainly, in later years, when I knew Miss Millay (for whom I cherish a sincere admiration), she was kind enough never to bring it up. My conscience, however, is fairly clear in regard to the poets I have known. I may have done them dirt sometimes, but not as a general practice.

Those are the facts as I see them, my friends. Oh yes, in the past I much enjoyed *Carl Van Vechten's* "The Tattooed Countess," and thought *Robinson Jeffers* overpraised for his "Tamar." These opinions, now brought home to roost, have elicited several superior snorts. Well, let them stand! I am slow on the pick-up, and can only say what I think I honestly think at the time of thinking it. Infallibility is for the Pope. Also, to see ourselves as others see us must be salutary. Indeed I have one helpful correspondent who takes the trouble constantly to correct my grammar, sending me clippings of the *Nest* with each individual error carefully pointed out. That's service! And don't think I don't appreciate it! . . .

Francis Brett Young is giving himself a year's vacation before starting another novel; he is planning a long trip through Africa next spring.

Whittlesey House has a perambulating author in *Walter B. Pitkin*, who is now travelling about the country interviewing people for a program broadcast over a national hook-up. . . . I wish to thank the F. E. Compton Company for sending me copies of *Anne Carroll Moore's* "Reading for Pleasure," as their contribution to Book Week. Miss Moore is an expert at selecting children's books.

The Macmillan Company is bringing out not only the "Poems, 1935" by *F. L. Lucas* but also "Four Plays" by the same English writer. They are being issued as companion volumes. In the preface to his poems Mr. Lucas defends some of his ideas about poetry. . . . The winter term of the John Reed Writers' School will open on December 2nd. Among the instructors and guest lecturers are *Malcolm Cowley, Josephine Herbst, Joseph Freeman, Genevieve Taggard, Isidor Schneider, Langston Hughes, Granville Hicks, Kenneth Fearing*, and so on. Registration is daily and evenings at 430 Sixth Avenue.

Trade Winds

By P. E. G. QUERCUS

CELEBRATING the 25th anniversary of the Doubleday Doran bookshops, Alfred van A. van Duym has exhumed for their attractive little give-away magazine *The Book Dial* a list of books which were selling well in the first D. D. shop at Christmas 1910. Looking over the titles gives reminiscent Old Q many a fugacious twinge. ☞For instance, among the high spots of that gift season 25 years ago:—*African Game Trails*, by T. R.— *Cupid's Cyclopedia*, by Oliver Herford (with pictures in color by Harrison Fisher, then a huge favorite). —*Once Upon a Time*, by Richard Harding Davis.—*Mr. Dooley Says*, by F. P. Dunne. —*What's Wrong with the World*, by G. K. Chesterton (it seemed relatively curable then, however?).—*Burning Daylight*, by Jack London.—*Molly Make Believe*, by Eleanor H. Abbott.—*The House of Bondage*, by Reginald Wright Kauffman ("Terrible in its realism" said the reviews).—*Jean Christophe*, vol I, by Romain Rolland.—*Adventures in Friendship*, by David Grayson.—*Whirligigs*, by O. Henry.—*An Affair of Dishonor*, by William De Morgan.—*Freckles*, by Gene Stratton-Porter.—*Clayhanger*, by Arnold Bennett. ☞These are only a few of Mr. van Duym's culled list; books don't die as fast as some other commodities; several of these are actually still readable. ☞What was there that made *The Bath Chairman, by Himself* (with introduction by H. G. Wells) "a literary discovery"? ☞The ranking best seller of that whole year was Florence Barclay's *The Rosary*.

☞Many a good grin can be had from the *Pennsylvania Dutch Cook Book* published for 15c at P. O. Box 250, Reading, Pa. Old Puerile Quercus's favorite P. D. motto is *De Mad mit dika Boka, Hen Hartsa we de Woka* (which means "the girls with fat cheeks have hearts like flint"). ☞Gimbel's are said to have sold 7500 copies of this bellysmiling pamphlet.

☞Marguerite Vance is holding a special meeting for young people at Dutton's Children's Department, 681 Fifth Avenue, November 23rd at 11 A. M. Edward Ellsberg, Emma Gelders Sterne and Edwin T. Hamilton will speak. ☞Mr. and Mrs. Charles B. Borden have opened the Yankee Bookshop at the Elm Tree Press, Woodstock, Vermont. ☞The first of the R. R. Bowker Memorial Lectures on the History of Book Publishing was given (at the N. Y. Public Library) on November 15 by Mr. Frederick A. Stokes.

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The Compleat Collector

RARE BOOKS: CONDUCTED BY JOHN T. WINTERICH

In alternate weeks this Department is devoted to Fine Printing and is conducted by Carl Purington Rollins

Sculptured Books

THIS department's recent appeal for identification of statues in which books are depicted has brought in an abundance of data which is bewildering in the heterogeneity of the subjects described. President Samuel Harden Church of Carnegie Institute writes:

> We in Pittsburgh would like to have a part in rounding out your collection of books in stone and bronze and so we hasten to call your attention to two in our city that are beloved sculptural landmarks.
>
> One is familiar to all visitors to the Carnegie Institute — a seated Shakespeare in stone by J. Massey Rhind which guards the entrance to our Carnegie Music Hall. The second is of a workman in bronze by Daniel Chester French which stands in front of the Carnegie Library of Allegheny (now known as the North Side of Pittsburgh), the very first library gift Mr. Carnegie ever made in this country. The statue is a memorial to Colonel James Anderson, who gave the messenger boy Andrew Carnegie access to his private library on Saturday afternoons, thereby implanting in the young reader his first taste of the joys of sharing books with others.

The Pittsburgh Shakespeare, as portrayed on this page, is being decorated on his birthday in accordance with annual custom. The decorator is Pauline Bauersmith, a Carnegie drama school student, attired as Lady Macbeth but looking, as anyone can see, far too gentle and good-natured for the messy business ahead of her. It will be noticed that Lady Macbeth is so placing the wreath that the recipient cannot hope to derive further instruction from the comely folio in his lap—a representation, perhaps, of the Florio translation of Montaigne or of Holinshed's "Chronicle."

The Anderson bust, of which Dr. Church sends an illustration and description as published in the *Carnegie Magazine* for January, 1930, surmounts a broad pedestal before which a steel worker, seated on an anvil, is earnestly reading an imposing quarto. The figure is, of course, idealized, but it is worth pointing out that the books which young Carnegie is known to have consulted in Colonel Anderson's library included "History and Present Condition of St. Domingo," "Historical Sketches of Statesmen Who Flourished in the Time of George III," "Lives of Most Eminent Sovereigns," "Confessions of a Reformed Inebriate," "History of Peter the Great," "Connections of the Physical Sciences," and "Heroines of Sacred History." The actual copies of these titles and several others which the future master of steel consulted were sent to the Andrew Carnegie Memorial Birthplace in Dunfermline on the occasion of its opening.

Dr. Church adds a postscript: "Of course many of your readers have by this time called your attention to Bryant Barker's Pioneer Woman with her Bible under her arm." No, only Dr. Church did, but Mrs. Samuel G. Babcock of Boston offers an eminently comparable effigy—the statue of Anne Hutchinson with her open Bible in the State House grounds. Mrs. Babcock also cites the figure of Guy de Maupassant in the Parc Monceau, Paris, at the base of which is "a reclining woman's figure reading an open book—'Bel Ami' perhaps." Carl William Hull, librarian of the DuBois (Pennsylvania) Public Library, also notes the Maupassant statue and adds the detail that the reading lady is "all ruffles and petticoats."

Other reports on sculptured books will be published in due course.

BOOKTOTING BARD GETS BAYS
From The Carnegie Magazine

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 86)

AMY LOWELL—"PURPLE GRACKLES"

A sociable lot, these purple grackles.
With high good nature they tell me
what I do not want to hear.
Nonchalant highwaymen, pick-
pockets, second-story burglars,
Stealing away my little hope of
summer.

A poet's excursion into narrative...

With these vignettes of four New England eccentrics, lovable but slightly mad characters, Winifred Welles extends the boundaries of her deft art. Her humor, her crystalline grace, the gay, ironic, and appealing qualities of her verse, are already known to the readers of her lyrics. In this new form, the narrative in verse, she recounts four curious histories: Abigail Penfold, saintly spinster, received an evil visitation; Miss Leffingwell wrote history while the flood raged; Parson Perkins communed with a lone green fay; Lemuel invented a universal language which lacked the verb "to be." Miss Welles has written her most delightful book — a lovely contribution to the poetry of today. The Viking Press. $1.75.

A SPECTACLE FOR SCHOLARS

by Winifred Welles

"Four extraordinary narrative poems... a small book of high and unusual quality."—Herschel Brickell, *Post*. "I stand among those who think Winifred Welles one of the finest craftsmen among our women writers . . . a book of beauty and shy humor."—W. R. Benet, *S.R.L.* "It is a rare and surprising pleasure to find such poetry written in our time."—*Herald Tribune Books*.

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Mussolini vs. Italy

(Continued from page 14)

was qualified by a considerable boldness in handling education and private property for the public benefit. Fascism indeed was not an altogether bad thing: it was a bad good thing; and Mussolini has left his mark on history.

"Mussolini has made his mark on history, but history records the marks of warriors, suppressors, and vandals as well as saviors and liberators." So says George Seldes in his new "Sawdust Caesar," a book whose language is sensational and strained from the title-page on, whose information is often hurried, but whose conclusions are sound. "He has a tremendous will but an inferior mind." Neither does it seem that Seldes waited until the start of the tragedy to think such thoughts. The first draft of the book was, he says, "completed in 1931, was accepted by a British publisher, but suppressed at the suggestion of the Foreign Office."

Many Britishers had dozed off in the pleasant conviction that Fascism was a private Italian affair, which concerned Italians only. They yielded to success and alleged genius; even if they had bitterly struggled, as Wells had done, against his rise. Nothing seemed to forebode British danger or world danger.

Then goes Professor Finer to Mussolini's Italy, and hurls his full, thick volume at the body of Fascism, a bad thing itself, but he cannot help loving the head. As he sees the genius, as he talks and listens to him, he is spellbound.

"A fine, massive, compact head; features well chiselled, but not sharp; a strong, pouting wilful mouth; a sculptured jaw, heavy, forward built, but clear cut; a clever forehead, with a promise of gentleness in its moulding. It is a hammer-head; the edges do not cut, but the head has mass, and can hit hard."

I do not say that the portrait bears no resemblance. I do say that Mr. Finer cannot enjoy his metaphor of the hammer. Italy, Africa, England, the world are now on the anvil.

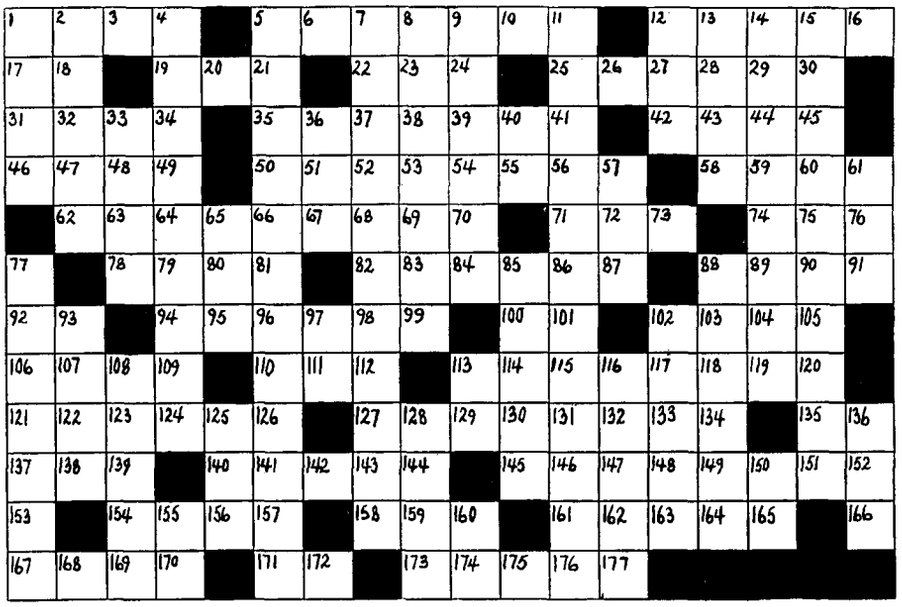
May the hammer fail to hit. May Italy escape from double suicide, and set herself free. But even if the Ethiopian conflict ends in a "dirty deal" in which the Colonial Powers all participate, there are no signs of genius in the actions which have led up to such a possibility, and no likelihood that society will benefit at large or in Italy from the troubles begun under the inspiration of Anarchism.

Geniuses are the master-builders who built and build the collective house of civilization, not the incendiaries who seek glory in the glare of destruction.

G. A. Borgese, Italian author and critic, taught for many years in the universities of Rome and Milan. He refused to take the Fascist oath. He is now an exile in America, professor of Italian and Comparative Literature at Smith College. His war and post-war novel, "Rubè," was published in English translation by Harcourt, Brace, in 1923.

Double-Crostic: No. 87

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY



DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-seven words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Unless otherwise indicated, the author is English or American.

The solution of last week's *Double-Crostic* will be found on page 21 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
I. Character in a play by O'Neill.	75 3 53 90 33 152 170
II. The god of light in Zoroastrianism.	142 48 157 19 52 70
III. Harshly grating.	27 117 101 146 122 82 111
IV. Less interesting.	21 38 54 65 18 128
V. Put forth blossoms.	167 83 5 39 69 50
VI. Last night (poetic).	168 32 25 1 49 124 6 97 34
VII. Violent or riotous behavior.	153 12 85 130 51 57 98
VIII. Iron ore used as pigment.	47 116 43 103 91
IX. Composer of "The Rosary."	56 160 133 86 20
X. A deep soup vessel.	4 175 17 126 66 29
XI. Political follower.	141 23 99 164 107 84 74 149
XII. An amendment repealed.	148 55 177 2 87 26 16 63 131 94
XIII. Mental disease.	76 145 22 125 72 151 169 100 172
XIV. Uneasiness.	93 95 78 42 132 113 127 118 28 14 7
XV. Son of Agamemnon.	156 136 61 102 106 30 138
XVI. Little ball.	35 89 115 147 134 8
XVII. Author of "The Prisoner of Zenda."	159 96 140 165 171 105 68
XVIII. Applicant for admission.	144 45 24 36 163 79 15
XIX. An entangling network.	135 80 64 31 40 161
XX. Christmas.	11 129 174 137
XXI. Inventor of elevator's safety brake.	37 71 9 143
XXII. Goods lost in shipwreck.	154 162 119 110 77 59 60
XXIII. Beginner at golf.	150 62 58 173 104 155
XXIV. Inspiring profound wonder.	108 81 73 120 114 46 92
XXV. Norwegian explorer (1861-1930).	10 166 176 67 123 88
XXVI. Horse-racing.	139 13 41 121
XXVII. Famous volcano.	112 158 109 44

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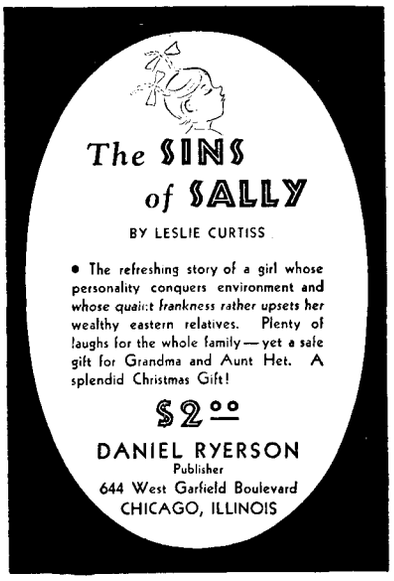
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PERSONALS

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PERSONALS

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